

Summer Village of Ma-Me-O Beach Viability Review

Pre-Vote Public Information Session Summary – September 3, 2025

Overview

The former Minister of Municipal Affairs, the Honourable Ric McIver, initiated a viability review for the Summer Village of Ma-Me-O Beach in December 2023. Following in-depth research and public engagement, ministry staff produced a viability review report, available at [Viability Review Report: Summer Village of Ma-Me-O Beach](#).

This report enables electors to make an informed decision when they vote on whether the summer village should remain or dissolve and become a hamlet in the County of Wetaskiwin.

This document summarizes questions raised during the pre-vote public information session and offers further details about the viability review process, as requested by participants.

Pre-Vote Public Information Session

The ministry hosted an online pre-vote public information session via Zoom on September 3, 2025, from 7:00 to 9:00 PM. Approximately 104 individuals attended the session either virtually or through viewing the live stream in the summer village community hall.

During this session, the ministry reviewed the contents of the report and gave attendees the opportunity to ask questions about information in the report and the vote of electors

Notice of the session was provided on the Government of Alberta website, the summer village website, and in a letter from the Assistant Deputy Minister mailed to property owners.

Municipal Viability

If you have any questions about the viability review or vote of electors, please contact:

780-427-2225 or toll-free by first dialing 310-0000 or email viabilityreview@gov.ab.ca

Themes

The following sections summarize key themes from attendees regarding the information in the viability review report.

'Pros and Cons' of Each Option

The viability review report presents a factual overview of what residents can reasonably expect if the summer village remains or dissolves. It is up to each elector to review the report and determine what they believe is best for the future of their community.

Perceptions of the advantages or disadvantages for each option that will be voted on, are unique to individual electors and may vary based on personal values. As such, the report does not provide a 'pros and cons' list for each option.

Voting Eligibility in Future Municipal Elections

Section 47 of the *Local Authorities Election Act (LAEA)* provides that a person is eligible to vote in a municipal election where their primary residence is located. Furthermore, Section 12 of the *LAEA* provides outlines that, in summer villages, property owners may vote in the summer village election, in addition to the election where their primary residence is located.

If the summer village dissolves and becomes a hamlet within the County of Wetaskiwin, only electors whose primary residence is in the hamlet would be able to vote in county elections. Individuals who own property in Ma-Me-O Beach as a vacation home or secondary residence, would not be eligible to vote in county elections.

Wastewater System Infrastructure

The province provided funding for the summer village to conduct an infrastructure audit. Summer village council conducted, approved, and submitted this audit to the ministry in April 2025. The ministry has included all the information it was provided in the viability review report. For further inquiries regarding the status of the wastewater system, please contact the summer village directly.

Municipal Affairs is unaware of any government grants available for the maintenance and operations of privately-owned septic systems.

Report Recommendations

Recommendations included in the report have been developed with input from the summer village, county and other municipal peers in the province that participated in the review. They are intended to improve the viability of the summer village and therefore give an indication of the actions the summer village would need to consider if the vote result is to remain as a distinct municipality. If the community votes to dissolve, the county may consider these recommendations; but is not required to action them.

The report presents the recommendations by topic area covered in the report, and the order does not represent a prioritization or order of magnitude. Historically, the councils of municipalities that have voted to remain a distinct municipality have been required to review and assess each recommendation and submit an action plan to the Minister. If councils have decided not to complete a recommendation, they were required to provide a rationale for their decision.

Should council choose not to address the recommendations included in the report, or if they are not carried out to the satisfaction of the Minister, the Minister may take additional actions, as required, as outlined in the *Municipal Government Act (MGA)*.

Services as a Hamlet

Section 3(b) of the *MGA* states that the purpose of a municipality is to “provide services, facilities or other things that, in the opinion of council, are necessary or desirable for all or part of a municipality”. If the summer village votes to dissolve, the county would determine which services it considers best for the hamlet. The *MGA* does not prescribe a list of specific services municipalities must provide.

The county has indicated that following a full evaluation of the needs of Ma-Me-O Beach, they may levy a special tax on former summer village properties to fund services exclusive to the hamlet, such as tourism services. Specific special tax amounts have not been indicated at this time.

Transitional Funding and Costs

Should the summer village vote to dissolve and become a hamlet in the county, the county is expected to receive transitional funding through the Alberta Community Partnership (ACP) program. The county must use this funding to support transitional costs associated with post-restructuring activities. This may include merging municipal records, reviewing bylaws and agreements, and communicating with hamlet property owners.

The county would also receive funding for capital projects that benefit the summer village.

The province will release funding amounts for 2025-2026 soon. Using the 2024-2025 funding amounts, the county would have received approximately \$164,000 in ACP funding to assist with transitional supports and \$692,000 in infrastructure funding.

Property Assessment and Tax Rates

Per Section 297 of the *MGA*, property assessors may assign properties one or more of the following assessment classes: residential; non-residential; farmland; and machinery and equipment. These classifications determine the tax rate for the property.

Residential properties are generally used for residential purposes, either as a primary residence or secondary residence. Non-residential properties include commercial and industrial properties.

Voting on the Question of Dissolution

Individuals eligible to participate in the vote of electors on the question of dissolution must meet several criteria outlined in Section 12 of the *LAEA*. Specifically, electors must be over the age of 18, a Canadian citizen, and:

- reside in Alberta with their place of residence in the summer village;
- be listed on the certificate of title of a property in the summer village; or
- be the spouse or adult interdependent partner of someone named on the certificate of title.

Documents that can be used to prove proof of ownership include a certificate of title, a bill of sale, a utility bill, a property tax notice, or other documents listed in [Voter Identification Proof of Property Ownership Requirements | alberta.ca](#).

An individual is only able to vote once on the question of dissolution, no matter how many properties they may own in the summer village.

After the Vote

If the summer village votes in favour of dissolution, the Minister must recommend dissolution to Cabinet. The final decision rests with Cabinet, which has historically respected the Minister's recommendation and vote outcome. The ministry will work to implement the dissolution as efficiently as possible, with a target effective date of January 1, 2026, which would allow the dissolution to occur at the end of the fiscal year, making the transition smoother.

The Minister may decide to appoint an Official Administrator to supervise the municipality and council from the date of the vote to the effective date of dissolution. This role would review the decisions of council and may allow or disallow them within 30 days.

If the summer village votes in favour of remaining, the Minister may consider ordering the municipality to take certain actions to ensure its viability. These actions have typically included adopting an action plan and a 10-year capital plan, and progress reporting for five years.

Additional Summer Village Public Meeting

The summer village is hosting a public meeting on September 10, 2025, at 7:00 PM. This session is to provide residents with an opportunity to ask any outstanding questions before the vote on the question of dissolution. The meeting link is available on the summer village website at mameobeach.ca.